

Executive Summary

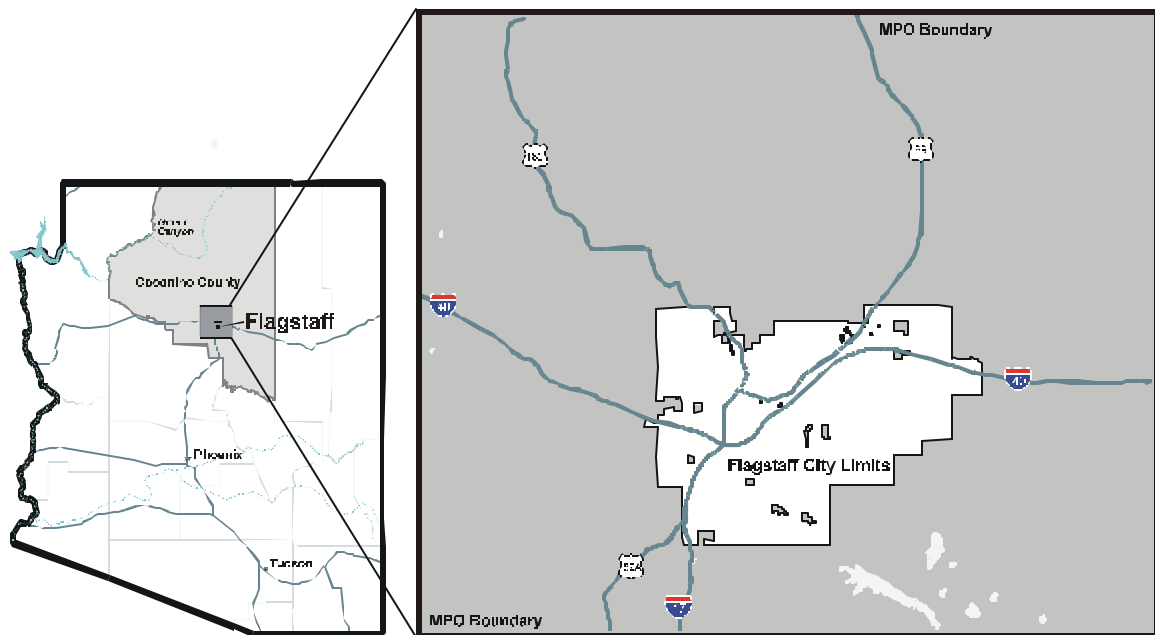
Plan Approach and Process

The Flagstaff Area Regional Land Use and Development Plan is intended to guide future land use decisions in the City of Flagstaff and surrounding area, as defined by the boundary of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (Figure 1). The plan evolved from an extensive review of the existing physical conditions and planning influences of the region, analysis of a series of key policy issues to be addressed by the plan, discussions with citizens and elected officials about the community's vision for the future, and an analysis of possible future land use and transportation scenarios.

Over the course of 15 months, a core planning team consisting of city and county staff worked with a 24-member Regional Task Force consisting of city and county residents. The Task Force provided guidance and advice to the project team by identifying issues and concerns in the community, provided input to the planning policies, discussed tradeoffs represented by various land use and transportation scenarios, and helped to define and recommend a preferred plan.

During the course of the planning process, open houses were held as opportunities to obtain input from the public, to receive input on the planning process, to review issues and provide direction, to review conceptual land use and transportation scenarios, and to provide input on the preferred land use and transportation scenario.

Figure 1. Vicinity Map



Vision and Objectives

Each generation makes its own contribution to the legacy of the region. The community's dream of how the region could and should be for the next generation is embodied in this plan. It is a statement of optimism and belief in the future, a statement that the region can become a better place. This plan sets forth an exciting vision by which the concerted efforts of both the public and private sectors will be directed. Its focus is on what the region could be 20 years from now.

Our vision is that Greater Flagstaff will have a compact land use pattern that shapes growth in a manner that preserves our region's natural environment, livability, and sense of community. By directing growth to well-defined contiguous areas, growth can be better accommodated without encouraging inefficient land use patterns; open lands and natural resources can be better protected; and public facilities and services can be delivered more effectively. With a finite supply of land, the plan shall provide for the region's growth in a manner that balances growth and conservation.

Our vision includes the following key objectives:

Efficient Use of Land

Land in the Flagstaff region suitable for development is a limited resource. By adopting a compact development pattern that uses our land resource efficiently, we can ensure that we provide for the long-term needs of the area's development, while at the same time achieving a more cost-effective and efficient provision of urban services.

Appropriate Land Use Patterns

Land use patterns in the region shall be planned in a manner that promotes efficient use of land. By focusing our land use patterns through development of walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods, areas attractively planned for employment and commercial uses, and infill and redevelopment where appropriate, development of the region will result in an improved living environment.

Regional Cooperation

The cornerstone of the plan is intergovernmental cooperation. The City of Flagstaff and Coconino County, by initiating this planning process, have made a strong commitment to work together in achieving regional land management objectives. The success of the plan will require that this cooperative approach continue and extend to include federal and state land management agencies as well.

Preservation of Open Lands

The forested lands and meadows throughout the region are a precious resource that all agree must be preserved and maintained. A more compact land use pattern will help ensure that these lands surrounding Flagstaff are not threatened by development. At the local scale, a compact development pattern can preserve land for open space within the city as well.

Economic Development Opportunities

The plan must be supportive of a healthy, thriving economy that provides opportunities for quality employment with livable wages for its residents. Locations for environmentally responsible employers who make a positive contribution to the community and the economy must be a part of the land use pattern of the plan.

Mobility and Transportation Choices

Our region's development pattern must support a diverse range of transportation choices for residents and visitors, including walking, bicycling, transit, and driving. The public and private sectors will cooperate in the development of a multimodal transportation system that balances mobility across all of the modes and gives citizens a greater range of alternative means of travel for different purposes.

Preserving Rural Character

Residents of our rural areas in the county have expressed a strong desire to preserve the rural character and lifestyle they currently enjoy. These characteristics include rural densities, access to national forest lands, scenic views, and clear night skies. The plan must recognize the clear distinctions between the region's urban and rural areas and incorporate strategies to protect and enhance the rural character.

Greater Opportunities for Affordable Housing

By supporting a more compact, mixed-use pattern of development, our neighborhoods can provide a greater range of options for housing types in more areas of the region.

Preserve and Enhance Natural Resources

Our region's natural resources—air, water, wildlife, dark skies, and cultural resources—must be protected and enhanced.

Promote Quality Design

The plan supports quality design and development. Emphasis shall be placed on quality design both in the public realm—our streets, civic buildings, and other public spaces—as well as the private realm—commercial buildings, work places, and housing.